National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received

date entered

	is in How to Compl —complete applic		ional Register Forms ctions		
1. Nam	ie				
historic St	. Louis Post-Di	spatch	Printing Buildin	ng	
and/or common	KSDK Buildin	q			
2. Loca					
street & number	1111 Olive S	treet		-	not for publication
city, town	St. Louis		vicinity of		
state	Missouri	code	29 county	City of St. Louis	code 510
3. Clas	sification	1			<u>, , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , </u>
Category district _X building(s) structure site object	Ownershippublic private both Public Acquisitio in process		Status occupied unoccupied work in progress Accessible yes: restricted yes: unrestricted no	Present Useagriculture _X_commercialeducationalentertainmentgovernmentindustrialmilitary	museum park private residence religious scientific transportation other:
<u>4. Own</u>	er of Pro	peri	i y		
name _awre	nce Deutsch and	James	Deutsch		
street & number	14 Wydown Te	rrace			
city, town	St. Louis		vicinity of	state	MO 63105
5. Loca	ation of L	ega	l Descripti	<u>on</u>	
courthouse, regis	stry of deeds, etc.	St. Lo	uis City Hall		
street & number	Mark	et Str	eet at Tucker Bou	ılevard	
city, town	St. Louis,			state	MO 63103
6. Rep	resentati	on i	n Existing	Surveys	
title 1. Misso	ouri State Hist	orical	Survey has this pro	operty been determined el	igible?yes X no
	1984				te county local
depository for su			: Preservation Pro	ogram; Missouri Depa	
city, town	Jefferson Ci	tv.		state	MO 65102

7		D	e	S	C	ri	D	ti	0	n
-	-		_	_	_		_		_	_

Condition		Check one	Check one
excellent X good fair	deteriorated ruins unexposed	unaltered _x altered	_X_ original site moved date

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The St. Louis Post-Dispatch Printing Building is a three story International Style structure of reinforced concrete with limestone facing. Designed in 1941, the building is located at 1111 Olive Street in St. Louis' Central Business District.

The building fills a lot measuring 106 by 226 feet and consists of three principal stories and basement. Its reinforced concrete construction is capable of sustaining unusual loads of between 250 and 300 pounds per square foot. The primary elevation facing south on Olive Street is divided into a major three story main block and minor four story entrance and utility tower (Photos #1 and #2). In the main block, the first story is defined by structural columns marking seven bays which were originally glazed, and two upper stories of alternating bands of wall and window. The building's base and columns are of black stone while the rest of the building is dressed in light-colored limestone in excellent condition. The west corner of the building gently curves (Photo #2) and is connected by an original recessed bridge to the building to the west (formerly the 1917 Post-Dispatch office building). The building's only ornamentation consists of simple stylized dentilation at the cornice. The northern (rear) elevation is of stock brick with the majority of its original glass-brick windows still in place (Photo #3). A comparison of Photos #1 and #2 with Photo #4, showing the building in 1943 when it was published in Architectural Design, indicates little alteration. Deteriorated metal casement windows in the second and third stories have been replaced but the entrance tower at the east end retains its original windows. It is the intention of the present owner to restore the street level glazing which has been walled up since 1962. The interior of the building was originally designed as a utilitarian space to house the Post-Dispatch printing presses. After the newspaper left in 1962, the interior was remodeled.

8. Significance

Period prehistoric 1400–1499 1500–1599 1600–1699 1700–1799 1800–1899 1900–	Areas of Significance—C	heck and justify below community planning conservation economics education engineering exploration/settlement industry invention	landscape architectur law literature military music philosophy politics/government	e religion science sculpture social/ humanitarian theater transportation other (specify)
Specific dates	1941	Builder/Architect Mauri	an, Russell, Crowell	& Mullgardt

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Post-Dispatch Printing Building is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C and is significant in the following area: ARCHITECTURE: Designed in 1941, the building has exceptional significance in the architectural history of St. Louis as the first consciously designed International Style building in the city's Central Business District, and the only one constructed there prior to the 1950s when the style was widely adopted. It is one of the last major works of Mauran, Russell, Crowell & Mullgardt, by any measure the single most important and influential architectural firm in the city between the World Wars, and represents a culmination of the tendency towards increasingly modernist design in the firm's work.

The International Style was first given national recognition, and authoritive definition, by Henry-Russell Hitchcock and Philip Johnson in The International Style: Architecture Since 1922, a 1932 publication which accompanied an exhibition of the same name at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City. Most of the examples of the style featured by Hitchcock and Johnson in their publication were by European architects, although they did illustrate works by Neutra and Schindler on the West Coast and Howe and Lescaze on the East Coast.

In the Midwest some of the earliest work in the style was produced by George Frederick Keck and William Keck in the late 1920s and 1930s.\textstyle In the St. Louis area, Harris Armstrong's early domestic work and his 7800 Maryland Building (1935) in Clayton were among the earliest authentic modernist designs. Additionally, in 1936, William C. E. Becker (engineer for the Post-Dispatch Printing Building) had designed a high-tech "skyscraper" glass and metal-decked greenhouse, the Jewel Box in Forest Park.\textstyle Due to the still-significant dampening effects on new construction resulting from the Great Depression, there was little building activity of any kind in the Central Business District not expressly connected with either local, state, or federal sponsorship. Considerable attention, however, was later given in the 1940s to the renovation and "modernizing" of older commercial buildings by means of sheathing them in new, contemporary-styled facades. The Post-Dispatch Printing Building, however, represented the first downtown building of new construction designed in the modernist International Style.

In <u>The International Style: Architecture Since 1922</u>, Hitchock and Johnson subsume the essential characteristics of the style under three headings: the treatment of architecture as volume; the principle of

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regularity; the avoidance of applied decoration. With only minor variations, the Post-Dispatch Printing Building met their major and minor criteria.³

The facade of the building is a continuous envelope that seeks to treat the building as a volume. It is a compact and unified design. Its masonry surface is clear and unbroken, composed of large panels of limestone whose graining is not matched (as contrasted to nineteenth century buildings) in order to stress the continuity of surface. Windows, with shallow reveals, are integral to the masonry plane.

The exterior treatment of the primary elevation achieves a degree of regularity and symmetry despite intended asymmetries in massing and details. The east end of the building (Photo #1) is an entrance and service tower which is balanced by the large plain masonry surface and service alcove of the western end (Photo #2). On the first floor, fenestration is determined by evenly spaced structural columns between these two masses. On the second and third floors, bands of uninterrupted windows extend from the entrance tower across the entire facade. These bands, the sun screen projecting above the first floor, and the projecting window sills of the second and third floors impart a distinctly horizontal feeling to the building characteristic of the International Style. This horizontal is off-set somewhat, however, by the vertical and functionally expressive rise of the entrance/service tower. Both the rounded corner of the west end (Photo #2) and the exterior columns contrast subtly with the overall rectilinear composition.

Except for the vestigial dentilation at the cornice line, almost all applied <u>ornamentation</u> is avoided. The building achieves its principal effects through massing, proportion, and refined use of materials.

In 1900 John Lawrence Mauran, Ernest John Russell, and Edward G. Garden, all formerly employed in the St. Louis office of Shepley, Rutan & Coolidge which had closed the same year, formed a partnership which was destined to grow into one of the most important architectural firms in the city during the first half of the twentieth century. Between 1900 and 1909, except for the addition to the Chemical Building (1902), the firm's major activity was focused on the design of fashionable ecclectically styled residences and churches built in the Central West End of the city. During this period Mauran achieved a degree of both local and national recognition. He served as president of the local chapter of the A.I.A. 1902-04, was appointed by President Theodore Roosevelt to the national Fine Arts Commission, and was chairman of the Public Building Group Committee responsible for the plans for a new municipal civic center and riverfront redevelopment incorporated in the city's first City Plan Report of 1907.

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Edward Garden resigned from the partnership in 1909. In 1911 William de Forrest Crowell became a partner in the firm. A 1903 graduate of the Architectural School of M.I.T., he had won the prestigious Rotch Traveling Fellowship in 1905. After studying at the Ecole des Beaux Arts for two years, he returned to the United States to begin practice. Over the next three decades, Mauran, Russell & Crowell, with the addition of W. O. Mullgardt as a partner in 1930, concentrated a majority of the firm's activity on public and commercial buildings and redevelopment activities within the downtown.

During this period Crowell was the principal designer of the firm, while his two older partners concentrated on planning and administration. Mauran served as national president of the A.I.A. 1916-18, was appointed to the national Fine Arts Commission by President Herbert Hoover, and served as president of the Plaza Commission Inc. which had as its responsibility the design of a Civic Building Group west of 12th Street during the late 1920s and 1930s. Russell was national president of the A.I.A. 1932-35, and was from 1917 to 1937 chairman of the St. Louis City Plan Commission. Although Crowell did not hold any important national or local positions, he did share his partners' progressive views on urban planning. In 1920 he proposed a scheme for riverfront redevelopment to the City Plan Commission. His long-standing advocacy of elevated roadways in the downtown were adopted by the City Plan Commission in its important report of 1928 which was the groundwork for what would eventually become the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial.

It was as a designer of major downtown buildings, however, that Crowell left his most enduring imprint on the city. With his arrival in 1911, the firm's activities shifted decisively to civic and commercial commissions. Prior to World War I the firm was responsible for the Laclede Building (1913), the Railway Exchange (1914), and the Statler Hotel (1917, in association with George Post & Sons). During the 1920s important commissions included the Southwestern Bell Building (1927), the Missouri Pacific Building (1928), the new Police Headquarters (1927), and the Federal Reserve Bank (1925). Among important works of the 1930s were the Federal Courthouse (1935) and the Soldiers Memorial (1937).4

By the time of his death in 1967, Crowell had a long-established reputation as an advocate of modern architecture. Newspaper accounts of 1927 and 1930 portrayed him at the height of his career as an engaging personality with decidedly progressive views. He was well traveled and something of an adventurer. In 1930, for instance, he has been aboard the Graf Zeplin on its trip from Germany to Moscow. He was fascinated with modern technology, designing several power boats for his own use, inventing improvements for

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automobiles (which he extolled as a liberating force in modern life), and designing for his firm the massive Cahokia Power Plant near East St. Louis which in its functional expressiveness would have warmed the heart of a Walter Gropius. During this period he also pursued purely artistic endeavors as well, continuing his activities as a watercolorist which had begun during his years of study at the Ecole des Beaux Arts. He is reported to have asserted that pure art and science were but the foundations of his craft. Neither alone produced good architecture, which for him, appears to have been a higher synthesis of the two.

Although Crowell's views and interests were decidely modern, his buildings prior to 1940 remained within the limits of the essentially conservative taste of St. Louis during this period. While his work of the 1920s and 1930s becomes ever more simplified and employs less and less applied ornament, it nevertheless remains either Neoclassical or Gothic in inspiration. Although his work is unmistakably contemporary, it remained ecclectic rather than becoming "modern." This was rather emphatically underscored by Frank Lloyd Wright upon a visit to St. Louis in 1939. Wright found the buildings of the new civic group west of 12th Street "post dated before it was begun," Crowell's Soldiers Memorial "a deflowered classic, a Greek thing run through a modernizing mill," and his Federal Courts Building "a pile of innocuous desuetude." To what extent Crowell was affected by Wright's criticisms of his work remains difficult to ascertain. But only two years later, in the last major work of his thirty year career as a designer, he produced in the Post-Dispatch Printing Building not only a good contemporary design, but an authentically "modernist" one as well.

The Post-Dispatch was founded by Joseph Pulitzer in 1878. Over the years, as the newspaper grew in size, it changed locations in the Central Business District four times. In 1917 it moved into a new building on the northeast corner of 12th and Olive Streets. Designed by Barnett, Haynes & Barnett, the new building was a handsome eight story Renaissance Revival office block. In 1941 the Post-Dispatch Printing Building was begun as an addition to this main office block for the purpose of housing the paper's presses. The addition was sited between the Post-Dispatch Building and an older, Romanesque six story building to the east on Olive Street.

Mauran, Russell, Crowell & Mullgardt undoubtedly received the commission for the new addition by virtue of Crowell's personal friendship with Joseph Pulitzer II. Although Pulitzer was not particularly an admirer of avant-garde architecture, he apparently appreciated both efficiency and simplicity and, thus, was receptive to Crowell's final design. 7

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Surviving copies of preliminary designs for the new addition indicate that initially Crowell produced a design that followed both the detailing and materials of the main office block. A change to the more radical design of the building as finally executed may have resulted from the fact that in May of 1941, shortly after acquisition of land for the new addition, Remington Rand Inc. leased the Romanesque Revival building to the east and announced plans for its complete renovation and "modernization." Among other improvements, its first floor was to be entirely glazed, the second and third floors modernized with, among other things, the installation of metal casement windows. Thus, the Olive Street context of Crowell's building would be significantly changed and Crowell's design, if left unaltered, "post dated," in contrast to its neighbor, even before construction began.

For whatever reason, Crowell dramatically altered his initial design for the new addition. As completed his building is nearly a text-book application of most of the major design principles prescribed by Hitchcock and Johnson in their book on the International Style. Its uniquely modernist design was an appropriate link, architecturally, between the "old" St. Louis of Crowell's generation and before, and the modern Central Business District of the post World War II "new" St. Louis.

Although construction on the addition was completed in 1943, war-time shortages impeded its intended use until 1948. In 1960 the Post-Dispatch again changed location, completing its move by 1962. From 1962 to 1982 the building served the Pulitzer Publishing Company's KSD radio and television station. The 1917 Post-Dispatch office block became the Missouri State Bank Building after 1962, its exterior receiving a completely new sheathing of a pedestrian character all too common in such downtown modernizing efforts during the 1960s and 1970s. To the east of the addition, the former Romanesque facade of the Printing Building's neighbor underwent still further modifications. Amidst the renewal and new building of the Central Business District during the 1960s and 1970s, the Post-Dispatch Printing Building was all but forgotten and certainly unappreciated even by those who most admired the city's post-War International Style-inspired new construction. Only very recently has it once again begun to attract the attention and admiration it deserves. 10

FOOTNOTES

Narciso G. Menocal, <u>Keck and Keck: Architects</u> (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1980).

²George McCue, <u>The Building Art in St. Louis: Two Centuries</u>, 3rd ed. (St. Louis: American Institute of Architects, St. Louis Chapter, 1981), pp. 79 and 146.

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³Henry-Russell Hitchock and Philip Johnson, <u>The International Style</u> (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1932; republished, 1966), pp. 40-78.

⁴The Laclede Building is illustrated in John Albury Bryan, <u>Missouri's Contribution to American Architecture</u> (St. Louis: St. Louis Architectural Club, 1928), p. 152. The remainder of the buildings cited are illustrated by McCue.

⁵"W. D. Crowell Dies: Noted Architect," <u>St. Louis Globe-Democrat</u>, 17 January 1967; "William Crowell, Architect, Dies, <u>St. Louis Post-Dispatch</u>, 16 January 1967; "A Master Builder and His Playthings," <u>St. Louis Post-Dispatch</u>, 16 January 1927; "Interesting St. Louisans: William De Forrest Crowell," <u>St. Louis Post-Dispatch</u>, 4 May 1930.

⁶"Frank Lloyd Wright Gives His Theory of Architecture," <u>St. Louis Post-Dispatch</u>, 9 January 1939.

Oral communication from Frank Peters, Arts Editor, St. Louis Post-Dispatch, based on a conversation with Joseph Pulitzer, Jr., May 1984.

⁸The copies of these preliminary drawings are in the possession of Mr. Lawrence Deutsch, the present owner of the Post-Dispatch Printing Building.

9"Building Leased on Olive by Remington Rand," <u>St. Louis Post-Dispatch</u>, 30 March 1941.

¹⁰Frank Peters, "Downtown St. Louis' First Sight of Modern Architectural Design," St. Louis Post-Dispatch, 10 June 1984.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See attached.

10. Geograph	nical Data			
Acreage of nominated property Quadrangle name Granite UTM References	y less than one City, IllMo.		Quadrangle s	cale 1:24,000
A 1.5 7 4 4 0 2 0 7 Zone Easting	412 719 21010 Northing	B Zone	Easting No	ı i i i
C		D		
G		H		
Verbal boundary description The Post-Dispatch Print a point on the north s	nting Building is side of Olive Stre	et approximate	y 100 east of Tu	property begins at cker Boulevard;
List all states and counties state	s for properties overl code		unty boundaries	code
state	code	county		code
11. Form Pre	code	county		code
name/title Lawrence S. Lorganization	owic, Ph.D., arch	da		
street & number 7533 Yor	k Drive	te	ephone 314-726-	3047
city or town St. Loui	s,	st	ate MO 63105	
12. State His	toric Prese	ervation (Officer Ce	rtification
The evaluated significance of t	his property within the s	state is: X_ tocal		
As the designated State Historic 665), I hereby nominate this proaccording to the criteria and prostate Historic Preservation Office	operty for inclusion in the rocedures set forth by the	ne National Register	and certify that it has b	
title Fred A. Lafser, Di	rector and State		rvation date	7/10/84
For NPS use only		· 		, ,
I hereby certify that this p	property is included in th	ne National Register		
Keeper of the National Reg			date	
Attest:	•		date	
Chief of Registration				A CONTRACT OF CONT

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- "W. D. Crowell Dies: Noted Architect." St. Louis Globe-Democrat, 17 January 1967.
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Verbal Boundary Description, cont.

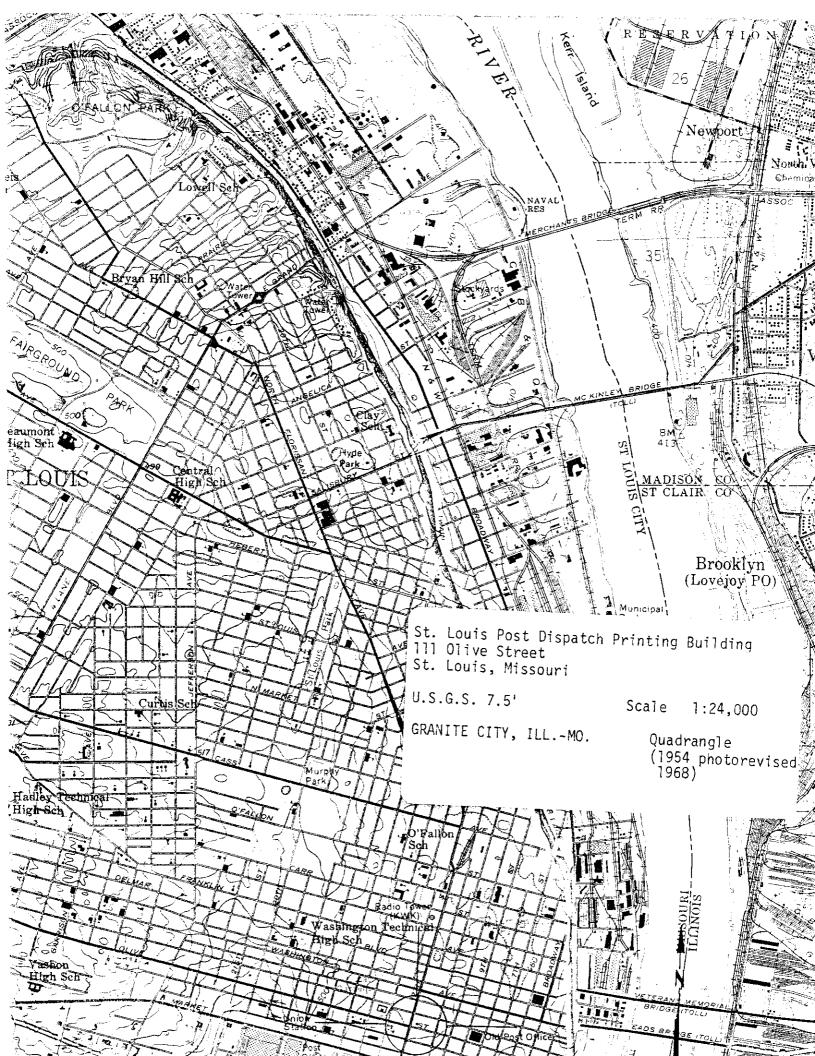
it then continues eastwardly approximately 226 along said side of Olive; then, turning northward, it continues approximately 106 feet to the east/west alley of City Block 516; then, turning westward, it continues along said alley approximately 226 feet; then, turning southward, it continues approximately 106 feet it the point of origin on Olive Street.

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State Contact Person
2. Jim Denny, Chief, Survey & Registration
Department of Natural Resources
1915 Southridge Drive
Jefferson City

June 10, 1984 (314) 757-4096 Missouri 65101



Post-Dispatch Printing Building 1111 Olive Street, St. Louis, MO

#1 of 4 Primary (south) elevation

Photographer: Lawrence Lowic Date: May 1984 Negative: 7533 York Dr. St. Louis, MO

Camera facing northwest.



Post-Dispatch Printing Building 1111 Olive Street, St. Louis, MO

#2 of 4 Primary (south) elevation

Photographer: Lawrence Lowic

Date: May 1984
Negative: 7533 York Drive
St. Louis, MO

Camera facing northeast.



Post-Dispatch Printing Building
1111 Olive Street, St. Louis, MO

#3 of 4 Rear (north) elevation

Photographer: Lawrence Lowic

Date: May 1984
Negative: 7533 York Drive
St. Louis, MO

Camera facing southeast



Post-Dispatch Printing Building 1111 Olive Street, St. Louis, MO

#4 of 4 Primary (south) elevation

Photocopy from:
 Architectural Design, Dec. 1943.
 by Silver Image Ltd., 1984.
Negative: Lawrence Lowic

7533 York Drive St. Louis, MO

Camera facing %0814

